

REMARKS

This response addresses the Office Action mailed December 30, 2003. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed Claims 2-13 and 21 and indicated that Claims 15-20 and 22 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the claim objection and rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's allowance and indicated allowability of these claims.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to an informality in Applicant's Claim 22. The present response includes an amendment of Applicant's Claim 22 that addresses this informality.

The Office Action included a rejection of Applicant's independent Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. According to the Office Action, certain language rendered the claim indefinite. Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's position. However, in the interest of advancing prosecution and allowance of the present application, Applicant has included an amendment of Claim 18 in the present response to address the claim language noted by the Examiner. With this amendment, Applicant submits that independent Claim 18 and dependent Claims 19 and 20 are allowable.¹

Included with this response is a petition for an extension of time to respond to the Office Action dated December 30, 2003, including an authorization for payment of the fee associated therewith.

¹ Applicant submits that the amendment of Claim 18 should not be construed as necessarily narrowing the scope of the claim.

Ser. No. 09/929,397
Response and Amendment C dated April 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated December 30, 2003

Applicant submits that this response addresses all the issues in the Office Action dated December 30, 2003. Therefore, the present application is in condition for allowance. If any issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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